



Arlington Human Rights Commission Minutes

Date: Wednesday November 24, 2020

Time: 8:00 PM- 10:00 PM

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation

Notice to the Public on meeting privacy In the interests of preventing abuse of videoconferencing technology (i.e. Zoom Bombing) all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their name may still do so by registering to receive the meeting info and using the telephone dial-in information provided.

Please read Governor Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provision of Open Meeting Law for more information regarding virtual public hearings and meetings:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/open-meeting-law-order-march-12-2020/download>

Attendees: Co-chairs Grossman and Bauer, Commissioners Rogers, Haynes, Pusey, Soneja, Brown, Jolin, Minton, Horowitz, Carney

DEI Office - Jillian Harvey, Christina Coleman

Interns: Annika Benn, Tessa Erbe

APD representative: Captain Flynn

Community Members: Rebecca Gruber, Len Diggins, David Kranz, Wynelle Evans

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 8:00pm by Co-chair Bauer

Land acknowledgement by Co-chair Grossman

1. Co-chair Report
 - a. Sign-up sheets will be sent for Incidents, Coffee chats
 - b. AHRC annual report was submitted to Town Meeting
 - c. Need to identify additional documents to be included into the HRC binder
 - d. Newsletter was very well received

- e. Meeting held with the Town Manager about the Community equity action plan and also solicit additional items to discuss with Town Manager
 - f. Received multiple emails inquiring about APD officer presence at the meetings
 - g. Met with Winchester folks about NA imagery, also heard from Belmont HRC to use AHRC BLM resolution language. Compliments on the work done
 - h. Request from Immigrant Learning Center in Malden. Looking for nominees of immigrant heroes - somebody who has helped people during this time, looking to honor 3 people next spring
 - i. Received a lengthy letter of appreciation about the work undertaken by the Commission
 - j. Working on filling the open vacancy
 - k. Co-chair Bauer spoke with a Lynnfield resident about considerations on starting an HRC
2. Review of Minutes
- a. A motion to accept the October monthly minutes was made by Commissioner Soneja, seconded by Commissioner Rogers, accepted with 10 votes, 1 abstained.
3. Review of Community Input
- a. Nice appreciation received about the newsletter and the HRC's work, and a query regarding how students can be involved in Black History month.
 - b. Discussion of Commissioner Coffee Chats included whether they should be continued since there are often few or no people attending, should they be every month, would it be beneficial to have an "on-call" pair of Commissioners instead of the chats, have a button on the website to "Talk to Commissioner," should we alternate between coffee chat & on-call, or pick a set day/time to build a following and publicize via the newsletter. December Chat– Commissioners Horowitz & Minton will host
4. Budget – No updates
5. Retreat follow-up
- a. Rules & Regulations: Co-chair Bauer & Commissioner Rogers met to finalize the changes. A question about section 10 was resolved – the AHRC may permit others to sell goods at AHRC sponsored events. Motion to vote to accept changes made by Commissioner Rogers, seconded by Commissioner Pusey. Unanimously approved.
 - b. Commissioner Pusey with ideas on how to engage the community more (leadership, governance, information, connection, and comfort)
 - i. The general goals of the AHRC are to provide leadership and consistency, issue stronger statements, and to build trusting relationships with all residents of Arlington, including the homeless, commuting workers, etc.
 - ii. In order for the AHRC to achieve these goals, we must have enough presence and visibility at events, as well as with any key organizations or governing bodies. The commission aims to increase signal boosting by

reaching diverse sources and staying consistent with our logo and branding.

- iii. All of these roles do not have to be solely accomplished by commissioners, many responsibilities can be delegated to volunteers and/or interns
- iv. Commissioner Soneja suggested making an itemized list of goals for the commission in order to ensure that the commission is proactively working to improve our presence in Arlington

6. Indigenous People's Day

- a. The goal of Indigenous People's Day is to raise appreciation, awareness, include land acknowledgments, and to address the use of Native Americans in mascots and logos
- b. Indigenous People's Day working group plans to write up a warrant article and other materials to present at the next commission meeting before reporting to the Select Board and town meeting
- c. Co-Chair Grossman mentions that we are trying to include all community members, regardless of their support, or lack thereof, for Indigenous People's Day

7. Equity Action Plan (EAP)

- a. Commissioner Jolin reports that the EAP is inclusive of race, socioeconomic, and gender and/or sexuality equity
 - i. The Equity Action Plan aims to plan consistent teaching programs for the community to create community educators, reform town documents and employee handbooks. The EAP also aims to work with the National League of Cities to educate town employees and develop standards in town government.
 - ii. Discussion required about how the HRC can contribute to this effort
 - 1. Trainings to be ongoing, need for regular updates, be inclusive, revise Town employee handbook
 - 2. Accountability for the plan, look for solid objectives for this plan make it available for community, formalize ways for community to participate
 - 3. Unity and different ways to memorialize civil rights efforts (BLM banner)
- b. DEI Coordinator Jillian Harvey explained that starting in January, staff training will be available to the Arlington Youth Counseling Center; Coordinator Harvey is working with a staff member at AYCC to implement the training. She is working to finalize the language of promotional material. DEI Coordinator Jillian Harvey is working on a series of events including public art projects and a digital archive for people of color in Arlington with hopes to launch this in Feb. for Black History Month

8. Procedure to review Warrant Articles

- a. Discussion about how Warrant Articles are presented to the HRC, this will be an ongoing discussion.

9. Review of Working Groups

a. Outreach

- i. Continuing to collect & build contacts lists, prioritize based on known issues: housing, refugees, immigrants' groups. Reach via Town allies - Housing board, other Commissions, APD, landlords, businesses

b. Communication

- i. Just released the big Fall/Winter newsletter. Next one due around MLK day to announce Black History month. Aiming to release before MLK day.
- ii. Mailing list now up to 700. Gained 73 subscribers (lost 23). New landing page for the website, request for a new page for videos, Native American Heritage day takeover for social media

c. Schools and Education

- i. Not met since the Oct meetings
- ii. Number of people attended the APS Superintendent interviews
- iii. Update from HRC interns
 1. Plan for an HRC club at AHS, hoping to coordinate with the AHRC
 2. Put together a packet for incidents at Middle schools - defining forms of discrimination with language designed for middle-schoolers, xenophobia, homophobia, Anti-Semitism and to discuss training to discuss these issues; this will be reviewed at the next Working Group meeting
 3. Looking for ideas to create community events with AHS club and for co-sponsorship. Some ideas shared about more participation

d. Events

- i. Social media takeover, by AHS students, planned, Danielle Kost to be interviewed about NA imagery on the Day of Mourning
- ii. Difficult conversations and week of service will lead up to MLK Day
- iii. Will create a slide show to be presented as part of the Town MLK Day event.
- iv. Next Wed, Dec 3 is the next Working Group meeting

e. Bylaws – Goal to implement by 2022

f. BLM Group – No updates

10. Community Input - no community members spoke

11. Incidents

- a. Commissioner Carney assigned this month, Comm. Brown for December
- b. Commissioners should alert the HRC if there are incidents reported via social media or other avenues
- c. Commissioner Carney reported on graffiti at East Cambridge Savings Bank near Thompson Elementary, and graffiti in October at Thorndike field
- d. Officer Flynn provided more information about the removal of Graffiti at Thorndike field and the side of the building of East Cambridge Savings Bank. The bank had graffiti KKK quote, but no cameras were around to catch this incident. Officer Flynn also said he will present on APD equity training at the next meeting.

- e. Commissioner Soneja reports that there were hate speech stickers on a few yard signs and that he has received no further updates on the graffiti at Ottoson.

12. Housing Issues

- a. AHRC needs a volunteer for the redesign subcommittee and to rewrite the preexisting brochure about housing. Commissioner Carney and Brown offered to work on this issue. DEI Coordinator Jillian Harvey can connect this group with Town employees working on this issue
- b. Commissioner Carney plans to consult with Suffolk University on their tenant rights study which could help the AHRC consider how to address racial discrimination and tenant rights in Arlington.

13. Announcements: None

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

Next meeting: December 16, 2020, 8:00 pm, Remote Participation.